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Part IX

Department of Education

Grants for Research on Knowledge Use and School Improvement

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

34 CFR Part 709

Grants for Research on Knowledge Use and School Improvement

AGENCY: Department of Education.

ACTION: Final regulations.

SUMMARY: The Secretary issues regulations that govern a program of research grants on knowledge use and school improvement. The program seeks to build knowledge about improvement processes in elementary and secondary schools. Studies will clarify how schools go about altering their administrative and instructional practices, and how knowledge resources in the form of ideas, new programs, products, or materials can support these changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: These final regulations are expected to take effect 45 days after they are transmitted to Congress. Regulations are usually transmitted to Congress several days before they are published in the **Federal Register**. The effective date is changed if Congress takes certain adjournments. If you want to know the effective date of these final regulations, call or write the Department of Education contact person.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rolf Lehming, Research and Educational Practice, Mail Stop 24, National Institute of Education, 1200 19th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20208. Telephone: (202) 254-6050.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

A. Background

In support of the Federal responsibility to provide leadership in the conduct and support of research into educational processes, Congress authorized the National Institute of Education (NIE) under Section 405 of the General Education Provisions Act to award grants for projects that further the realization of these national educational goals.

The studies on knowledge use and school improvement are designed to help build a systematic body of knowledge about effective improvement processes in elementary and secondary schools. This research seeks to clarify how schools go about altering their administrative and instructional practices, and how knowledge resources in the form of ideas, programs, products, or materials can support these changes. Results of this research program will be used by the Department to help policy makers, practitioners, and education officials at all levels to formulate and implement school improvement efforts more effectively.

These regulations describe—

(1) The purposes of the proposed program of studies on knowledge use and school improvement;

(2) The scope of the program;

(3) The types of activities eligible for support;

(4) The criteria that will be used in the selection of grantees; and

(5) Project requirements.

B. Summary of the Regulations

Subpart A of the regulations (1) describes the program, (2) lists the regulations that apply, (3) states who is eligible to apply, and (4) provides definitions.

Subpart B discusses the types of activities that are eligible for support under the program and describes ineligible activities.

(1) The program will support only research on knowledge use and school improvement. Examples of school improvement activities include organized attempts of schools, school districts, educators and educational organizations to improve, and render more equitable, student learning, instruction or curriculum, school or district organization or operations, or the ways the schools relate to their communities or governance organizations. High-quality studies of these kinds of processes will be eligible for support, provided they show promise of adding to our understanding of how school improvement and greater educational equity come about.

(2) Grants will not be made for the planning of a school improvement project or for its development, implementation, operation, modification, demonstration, evaluation, or dissemination.

Subpart C is reserved.

Subpart D states how the Secretary makes award decisions and what criteria are used for selecting applications that merit support. These criteria are identical for major and small grants.

Subpart E explains certain conditions that a grantee must meet.

C. Relationship to Education Division General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR)

The Education Division General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) were published as final rules in the **Federal Register** on April 3, 1980 (FR 22494–22530). These regulations have been drafted to conform to the EDGAR requirements and to supplement EDGAR for the purpose of governing grants for research on knowledge use and school improvement. Except as noted in § 709.3, the EDGAR provisions apply to these grants.

The present regulations do not repeat certain types of requirements that are covered by EDGAR. These include:

How to apply for a grant.

How grants are made.

Conditions a grantee must meet.

Administrative responsibilities of a grantee.

Procedures used by the Secretary to assure compliance.

D. Relationship to Consolidated NIE Grant Regulations

The Department is currently developing a set of proposed regulations to govern all of NIE's research grants programs. The current rules are expected to be replaced by those regulations after they become effective.

E. Location of Regulations

These regulations were published as a notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) in the **Federal Register** (41 FR 13135–13138). They are now being issued as final regulations, and there have been changes in the numbering of sections. Thus, changes that result from public comment have section numbers that correspond to those in the final regulations. The affected section numbers of the NPRM appear in brackets.

F. Comments Received and Changes Made in the Regulations

Section 709.1(b)(2) [§ 1496.1(b)(2)] *Description of the Research on Knowledge Use and School Improvement Program.*

Comment. One commenter expressed concern that State educational agencies, while bearing main responsibility for public education, were not explicity mentioned as influencing school improvement activities and suggested doing so.

Response. A change has been made. Governance agencies outside the school district are specifically mentioned.

Section 709.12 [§ 1496.12] *Ineligible projects.*

Comment. One commenter noted that research to be proposed under these regulations might address questions about project effects as part of a larger research design. The commenter expressed concern that this type of incidental evaluation component might make this work ineligible.

Response. A change has been made. The section has been revised to state that project evaluations are ineligible. However, research containing an evaluation component as an incidental part of a larger research design is eligible under these regulations.

Section 709.32(d)(iv) [§ 1496.32(c)(1)] *What selection criteria does the Secretary use?*

Comment. A commenter suggested that selection criteria should specifically include points for the extent to which a proposed project could contribute to enhanced educational equity, along with its contribution to educational practice.

Response. A change has been made. The Secretary is committed to examining and improving educational equity wherever possible. A project's significance for enhancing educational equity is specifically included in the selection criteria.

Part 709 Subpart C [Part 1496 Subpart C] *How an Application for a Grant is Made*

Comment. A commenter asked that application procedures be kept simple so school districts with limited staff resources could apply for grant support.

Response. No change has been made. These regulations do not establish unique application procedures. Application procedures have been streamlined and simplified and are published in EDGAR.

Sections 709.11–709.12 [§§ 1496.11–1496.12] *Projects that will be assisted.*

Comment. One commenter noted that schools face a major problem in coordinating various social service programs potentially available to students and their parents, such as health care, counseling, and job training programs, with the school's education activities. The commenter expressed the hope that this problem could be addressed under these rules. Another commenter noted that schools face a severe problem of school dropouts and alienated pupils in schools and urged that this problem be studied.

Response. No change has been made. Improvement efforts that seek to address these problems are a permissible subject for research under these regulations.

G. Application Information

A first round of applications has already been received, based on the NPRM that was published in the **Federal Register** of February 28, 1980 (45 FR 13135–13138). Application notices inviting applications for future competitions will be published in the **Federal Register** at appropriate dates in the future. To obtain additional program information, including a package that contains detailed information about the program, contact Rolf Lehming, Knowledge Use and School Improvement Studies Staff, Mail Stop 24, NIE, 1200 19th Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20208.

Citation of Legal Authority

A citation of statutory or other legal authority is placed in parentheses on the line following each substantive provision of these regulations.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 13.950, Educational Research and Development. Part I of OMB Circular A-95 does not apply to this program)

Dated: August 7, 1980.

Shirley M. Hufstedler,

Secretary of Education.

Title 34 of the Code of Federal Regulations is amended by adding a new Part 709 to read as follows:

PART 709—GRANTS FOR RESEARCH ON KNOWLEDGE USE AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Subpart A—General

Sec.

709.1 Description of the Research on Knowledge Use and School Improvement Program.
709.2 Eligible applicants.
709.3 Regulations that apply to this program.
709.4 Definitions that apply to this program.
709.5 Types of grants.

Subpart B—Projects That Will Be Assisted

709.11 Projects that are eligible for support.
709.12 Projects that are ineligible for support.

Subpart C—How an Application for a Grant is Made [Reserved]

Subpart D—How Grants are Made

709.31 How does the Secretary evaluate an application?
709.32 What selection criteria does the Secretary use?
709.33 How the Secretary selects a new project.

Subpart E—Conditions a Grantee Must Meet

709.41 Restrictions on the items a grant may support.

Authority. Section 405 of the General Education Provisions Act, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1221e); Section 414 of the Department of Education Organization Act (20 U.S.C. 3474).

Subpart A—General

§ 709.1 Description of the Research on Knowledge Use and School Improvement Program.

(a) Through the Research on Knowledge Use and School Improvement Program, the Department of Education builds a systematic body of knowledge about improvement processes in elementary and secondary schools.

(b) The program explores:

(1) How elementary and secondary schools go about improving educational quality and equity by altering existing administrative and instructional practices, and how knowledge resources in the form of ideas, programs, products, or materials can support these changes;

(2) How bureaucratic, political, economic, cultural and other aspects of school life, such as school-community or school-state relations, affect school changes, and how these influences modify the effects of knowledge resources; and

(3) How knowledge and resources from outside the school district or school can support the different phases of a school improvement process.

(20 U.S.C. 1221e(b)(2))

§ 709.2 Eligible applicants.

Any institution of higher education, State educational agency, local educational agency, public or private nonprofit or for-profit agency, organization, individual, or any combination of these is eligible to apply for a grant award under this program.

(20 U.S.C. 1221e(e)(1))

§ 709.3 Regulations that apply to this program.

In addition to the regulations in this part, the Education Division General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 45 CFR Part 100a (Direct Grant Programs) and 45 CFR Part 100c (General) apply, except the following:

(1) 45 CFR 100a.115 and 45 CFR 100a.590 through 100a.592, project evaluations.

(2) 45 CFR 100a.205 through 100a.206, selection criteria.

(20 U.S.C. 3474)

§ 709.4 Definitions that apply to this program.

(a) *Definitions in EDGAR.* The following terms used in these regulations are defined in 45 CFR Part 100c:

Applicant
Application
Award
Direct Cost
Government
Local educational agency
Local government
Nonprofit
Public
Secretary
State
State educational agency

(b) *Specific program definitions:* Definitions as used in this part are:

"Major grant" means support for a project whose direct, federally supported costs exceed $15,000.

"Small grant" means support for a project whose direct, federally